



Manga

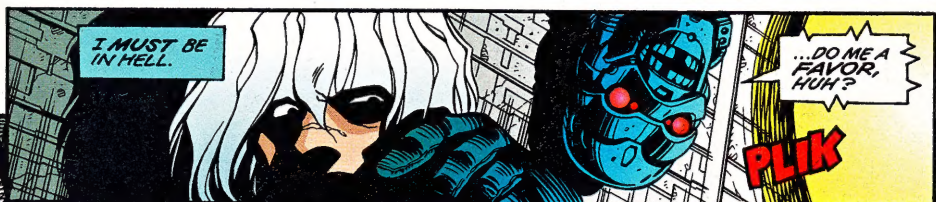
BUBBLEGUM
CRISIS
3 OF 4

\$2.50 US
\$3.40 CAN

BUBBLEGUM CRISIS

GRAND
MAL





THESE FRIGGIN' MECHS MUST HAVE A WEAKNESS FOR ORGANICS, HUH?

I'M NOT HAVING A PRESEIZURE HALLUCINATION, THIS TIME...

THESE MACHINES, THE SKORPION'S IMPROVISED SUBUNIT MECHS, ARE REAL, NOT IMAGINARY.

THEY HAVEN'T CANNIBALIZED YOU FOR PARTS YET, I NOTICE.

HEY--!

THE MECHS LOOK RAGGED, PIECED TOGETHER, BARELY FUNCTIONAL...

...LIKE ME...

...BUT EVEN AFTER THREE YEARS...

HOLD ON!

DO THESE THINGS ACTUALLY KNOW YOU?

...I CAN STILL RECOGNIZE PARTS OF THE SKORPION'S ORIGINAL FRAME.

--TO INTRODUCE THE FINAL MEMBER OF YOUR TEAM--

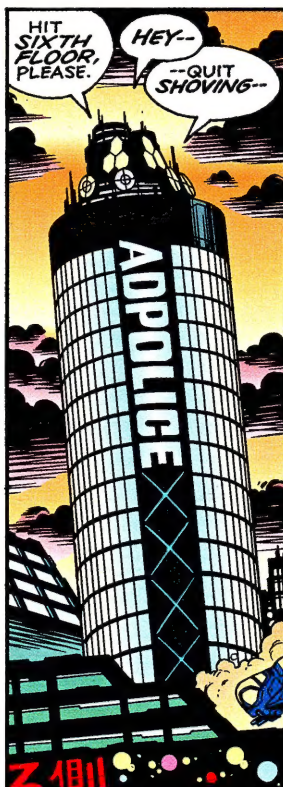
--THE PRIDE AND JOY OF VOERUNG-MIKOYAN INTERESSENGE-MEINSCHAFT'S ADVANCED MECHATRONICS DIVISION--

HEY, VASHNEVSKAYA

--THE SKORPION 19 ANTHOLOGY INTELLIGENCE SEMI-AUTONOMOUS SELF-REPLICATING RECON/COMBAT MECHANIZED UNIT--

VREEE

...YOU NEVER SAID WE'D BE WORKING WITH A MECH...!



HIT
SIXTH
FLOOR,
PLEASE.

HEY--

--QUIT
SHOVING--

--WHAT'S THE
LOAD LIMIT
ON THIS
THING?

--GOING DOWN,
MR. TYLER?

234567891

--SO
THEN HE
SAYS--

--EVER
TELL YOU I'M
CLAUSTRO-
PHOBIC?

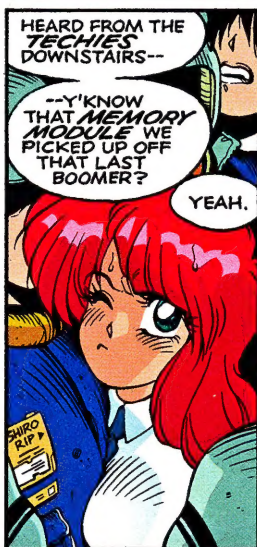
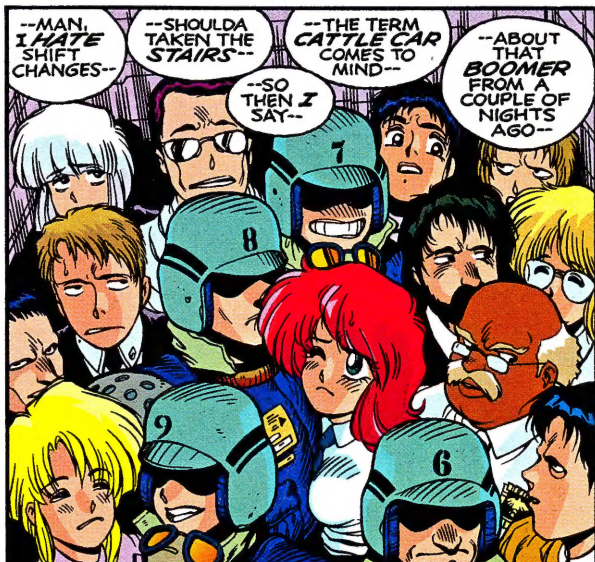
--MAN,
I HATE
SHIFT
CHANGES--

--SHOULD
A TAKEN THE
STAIRS--

--THE TERM
CATTLE CAR
COMES TO
MIND--

--ABOUT
THAT
BOOMER
FROM A
COUPLE OF
NIGHTS
AGO--

--SO
THEN Z
SAY--



HEARD FROM THE
TECHIES
DOWNSTAIRS--

--Y'KNOW
THAT MEMORY
MODULE WE
PICKED UP OFF
THAT LAST
BOOMER?

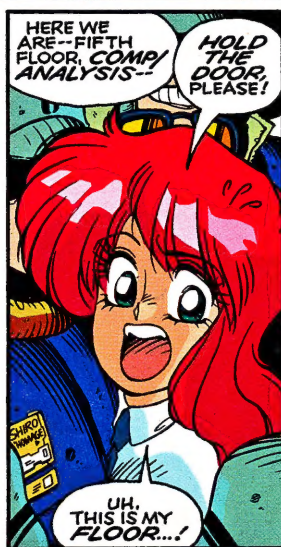
YEAH.



TURNS OUT
THOSE GEEKS
IN COMPI
ANALYSIS
FINALLY
DECRYPTED
THE DAMN
THING,
MAN.

WELL, WHOOP-
DEE-
FRIGGIN'-
DOD.

GLAD
TO HEAR
IT.



HERE WE
ARE--FIFTH
FLOOR, COMPI
ANALYSIS--

HOLD
THE
DOOR,
PLEASE!

UH,
THIS IS MY
FLOOR...!



THE SKORPION 19 WAS THE LAST GASP OF FINE EUROPEAN MECHATRONICS, BEFORE GENOM'S BOOMER TECHNOLOGY FINALLY DROVE THE EUROS OUT OF THE FIELD.

IT WAS DESIGNED AS AN ANTHOLOGY INTELLIGENCE, ABLE TO DISPERSE ITS LIMITED AWARENESS THOUGH A JURY-RIGGED NETWORK OF SUBUNIT MECHS AND COMPUTERS.

COMPARED TO THE HUMAN-DERIVED COMPLEXITY OF GENOM'S BOOMERS, THE SKORPION IS CRUDE AND PATHETIC, A BARELY COGNITIVE HEAP OF OBSOLETE MACHINERY.

BUT IT'S ALMOST UNBEATABLE AT THE FEW SPECIALIZED TASKS IT WAS BUILT TO HANDLE.

A MECHANICAL IDIOT SAVANT, YOU MIGHT SAY.

--VASHNEVSKAYA, YOUR COMLINK IMPLANT SHOULD BE ABLE TO RECEIVE THE SKORPION'S ENCRYPTED TRANSMISSIONS NOW.

CAN YOU HEAR IT?

THE SKORPION COMMUNICATES VIA "AUDIO SAMPLES" TAKEN FROM VARIOUS MEDIA SOURCES.

THIS MIGHT BE A JAR-RING, AT FIRST...

NAH, NOT REALLY.

IT JUST SOUNDS LIKE REALLY PRETENTIOUS AUDIO-FORMAT PERFORMANCE ART...

"DON' CHOO KNOW IT'S A LOCO?"

THREE YEARS AGO, FEELING THE ECONOMIC BITE FROM GENOM, A CON-SORTIUM OF AILING EUROPEAN COR-PORATIONS HIRED MY EXTRACTION TEAM.

C'MON, MAN...

WE CAME TO MEGATOKYO, THE VERY LION'S DEN. TO SNAG ONE OF GENOM'S "INTELLECTUAL ASSETS."

...HAVE SOME SYMPATHY, HUH? I'M NOT LIKE THESE IDIOT MECHS...

...I'M A SENTIENT BEING LIKE YOU, DAMN IT...

ALAS, SOMEONE HAD LEAKED WORD OF OUR DARING MISSION TO OUR TARGET.

GENOM, WARNED OF OUR EVIL INTENT, LAUNCHED A PREEMPTIVE STRIKE.

COMBAT BOOMERS, SIMILAR TO MY DECAPITATED FRIEND HERE, AMBUSHED US IN TOKYO BAY.

THE HUMAN MEMBERS OF THE TEAM FACED CERTAIN DEATH.

BUT THE SKORPION HAD ALREADY BEEN SHIPPED TO MEGATOKYO, WEEKS AHEAD OF OUR ARRIVAL.

HOPING FOR SOME POSTHUMOUS REVENGE, I STARTED TO TRANSMIT THE SKORPION'S ACTI-VATION CODE.

MAYBE THE MECH COULD DO SOME DAMAGE TO GENOM ON ITS OWN.

BUT BEFORE
I COULD
"LET SLIP
THE DOGS
OF WAR"...

--GENOM
INTERRUPTED
ME WITH A
TRANSMISSION
OF ITS OWN--

HEY,
NENE...

MAN, YOU GUYS
ARE JUST TOO
PAROCHIAL.

YOU GOTTA CULTIVATE
AN APPRECIATION OF THE
PROGRAMMING TECH-
NIQUES OF OTHER
CULTURES, SEE?

GIVE IT
A REST,
SIMMONS...

...WHAT'CHA
DOING DOWN
HERE, IN THE LAND OF
COMPUTER
GEEKS...?

COMP/
ANALYSIS

I CAN'T
BELIEVE
YOU COULDN'T
FIGURE OUT THIS
MODULE'S CODING
STRUCTURE...

IT'S AN OBVIOUS
VARIANT OF AN OLD
GERMAN PROGRAMMING
LANGUAGE THAT USED
TO BE ALL THE RAGE
IN EUROPEAN MECH
DESIGN.

SIMPLE
STUFF,
REALLY.

YEAH,
WELL,
WHAT'S
ON THE
DAMN
THING?

DISKTEK HR 120
HIGH-DENSITY
OPTICAL STORAGE
MEMORY MODULE

LOOKS LIKE A
WEIRD JUMBLE OF FILES
ON THE ORIGIN OF
BOOMER ARTIFICIAL
INTELLIGENCE...
ANCIENT HISTORY,
REALLY.

ANYWAY,
YOU GUYS CAN
CHECK IT OUT,
I'VE GOT IT
DOWNLOAD-
ING NOW.

JUST LET ME KNOW IF
YOU GET STYMIED
AGAIN BY SUCH
SIMPLE CRAP.

CLEARLY
NO ONE
AROUND HERE
COMES CLOSE
TO MY LEVEL
OF SKILL...

THAT'S
WHAT YOU
THINK,
JERK...!

ONCE AGAIN,
I'M FACING
A SLAYERING
HORDE OF
COMBAT
BOOMERS.

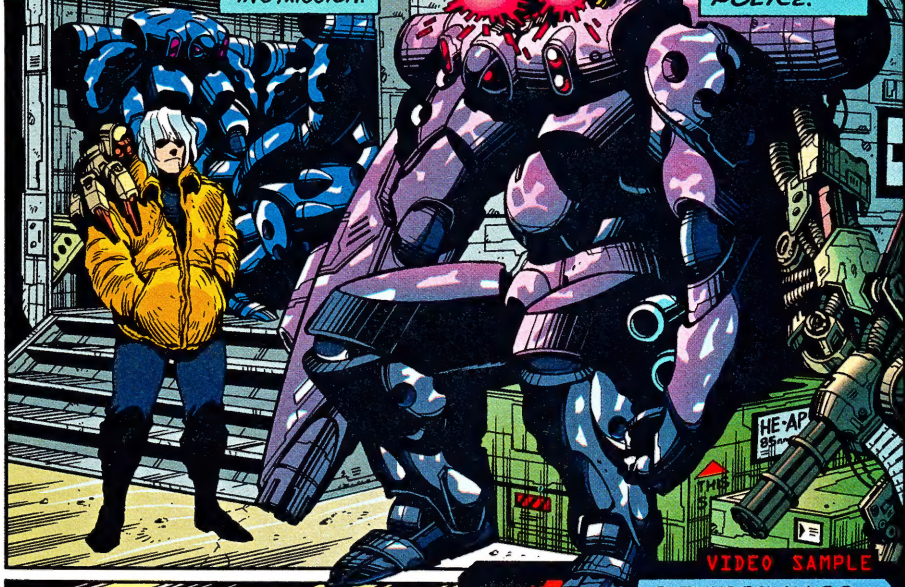
BUT THIS
TIME, THEY'LL
BE ON MY SIDE.

I HOPE.

TWO NIGHTS AGO,
THE SKORPION TELLS
ME, A HOSTILE
BOOMER RIPPED OFF
SOME VITAL
ELEMENT OF THE
MECH'S ANTHOLOGY
INTELLIGENCE.

SOME
MEMORY
MODULE,
STUFFED
WITH DATA
CRITICAL
TO OUR DAR-
ING MISSION.

EVENTUALLY,
THE MODULE
ENDED UP IN
THE HANDS OF
MEGATOKYO'S
HAPLESS
ADVANCED
POLICE.



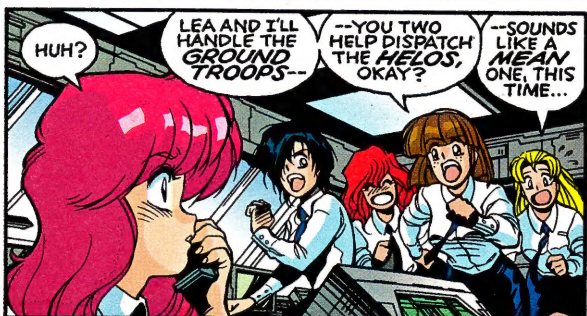
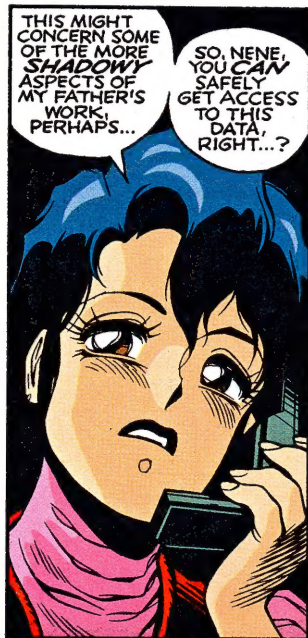
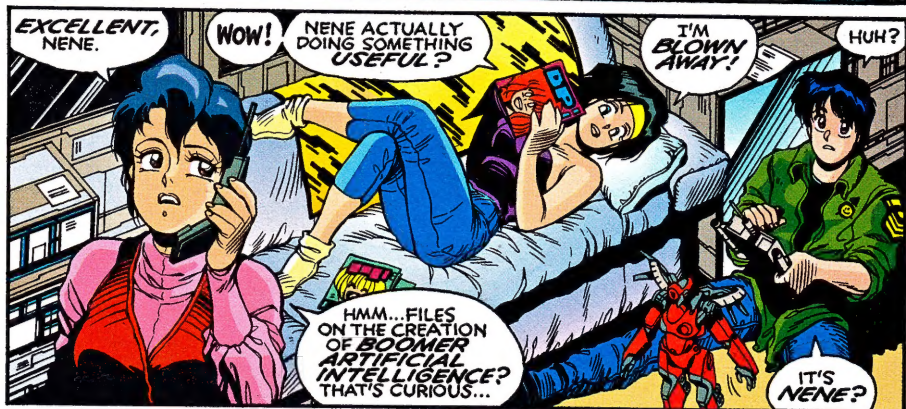
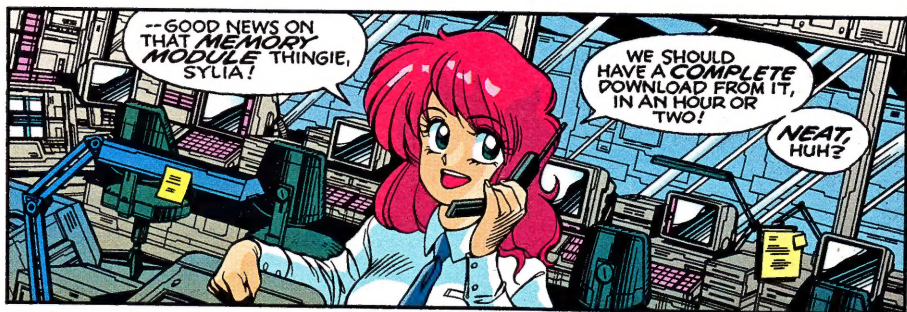
VIDEO SAMPLE

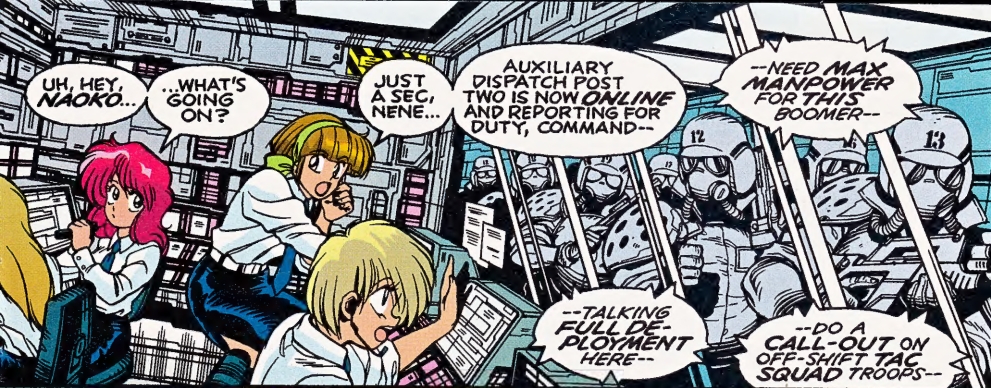
NOW WE'RE PRES-
SING A STOLEN
COMBAT BOOMER
INTO SERVICE TO
HELP RECOVER IT.

NOTHING'S
MORE
PLEASINGLY
IRONIC
THAN USING
AGENOM
PRODUCT
AGAINST ITS
MAKERS...

---PUTTING DOWN A DO-
MESTIC INSURGENCY?
PLANNING SOME TERRITO-
RIAL EXPANSION BY FORCE?

OR JUST LOOKING TO SPICE UP YOUR
JANE'S DAY MILITARY PARADE?
WELL, THE HEAVY-DUTY BU-12C
COMBAT BOOMER IS JUST WHAT--





UH, HEY, NAKO...

...WHAT'S GOING ON?

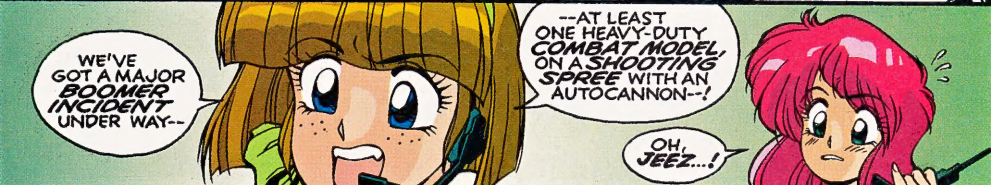
JUST A SEC, NENE...

AUXILIARY DISPATCH POST TWO IS NOW ONLINE AND REPORTING FOR DUTY, COMMAND--

--NEED MAX MANPOWER FOR THIS BOOMER--

--TALKING FULL DEPLOYMENT HERE--

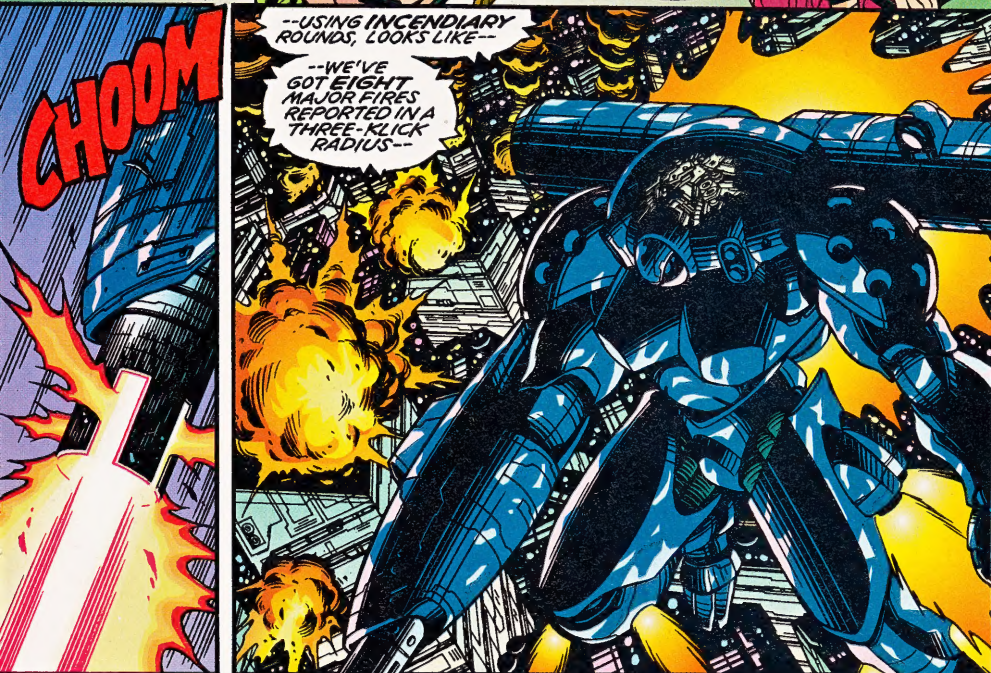
--DO A CALL-OUT ON OFF-SHIFT TAG SQUAD TROOPS--



WE'VE GOT A MAJOR BOOMER INCIDENT UNDER WAY--

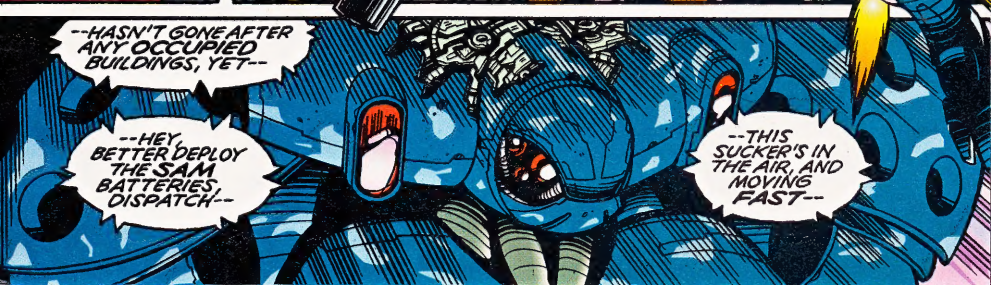
--AT LEAST ONE HEAVY-DUTY COMBAT MODEL ON A SHOOTING SPREE WITH AN AUTOCANNON--!

OH, JEEZ...!



--USING INCENDIARY ROUNDS, LOOKS LIKE--

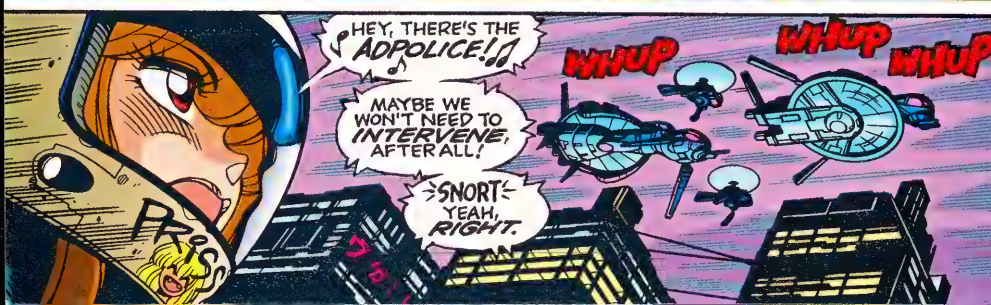
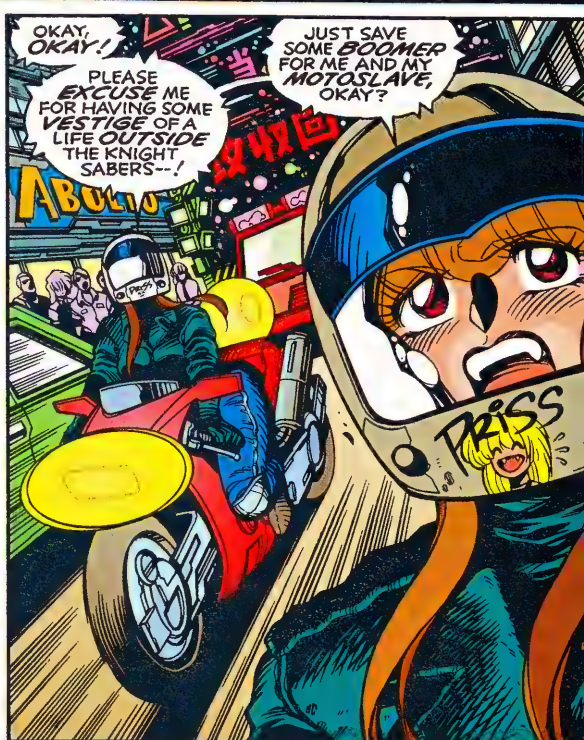
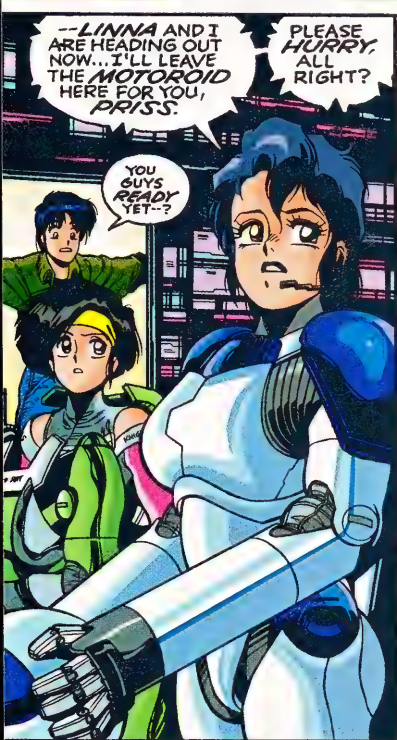
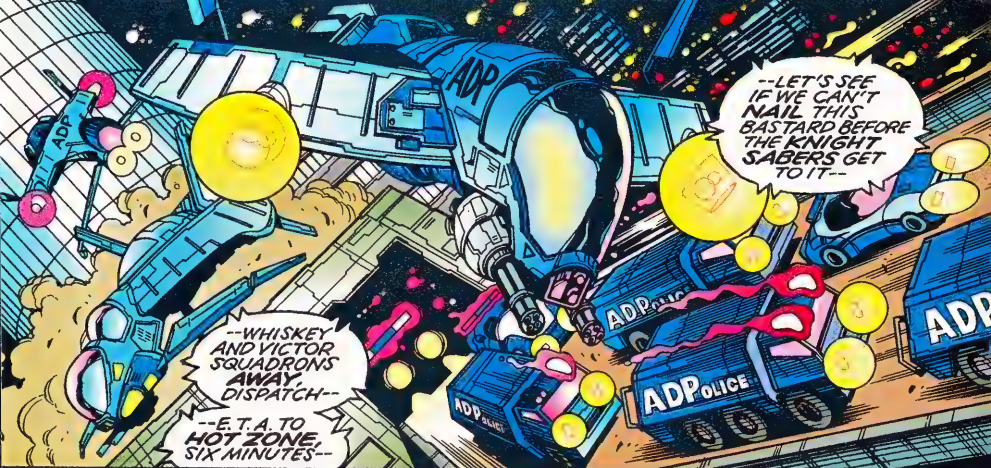
--WE'VE GOT EIGHT MAJOR FIRES REPORTED IN A THREE-KLICK RADIUS--



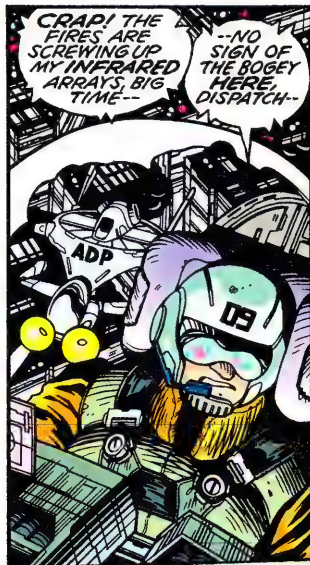
--HASN'T GONE AFTER ANY OCCUPIED BUILDINGS, YET--

--HEY, BETTER DEPLOY THE SAM BATTERIES, DISPATCH--

--THIS SUCKER'S IN THE AIR, AND MOVING FAST--



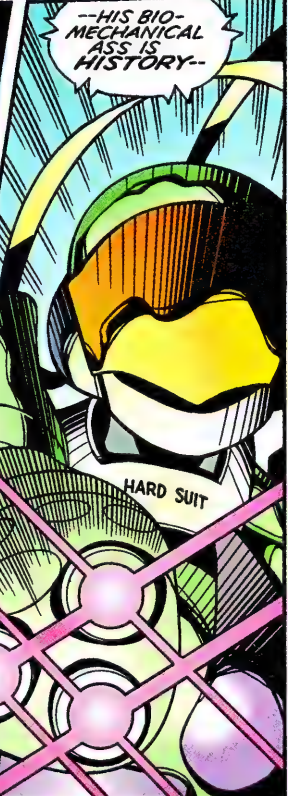
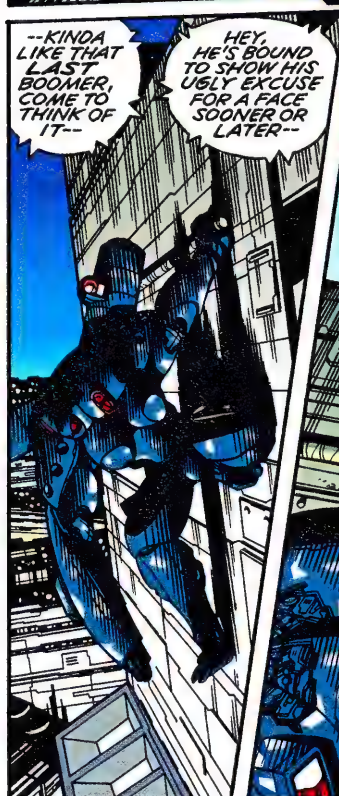
VIDEO SAMPLE

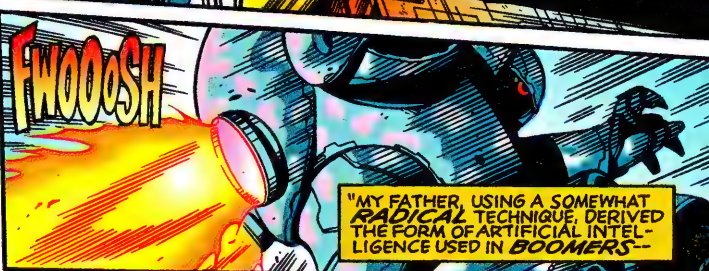
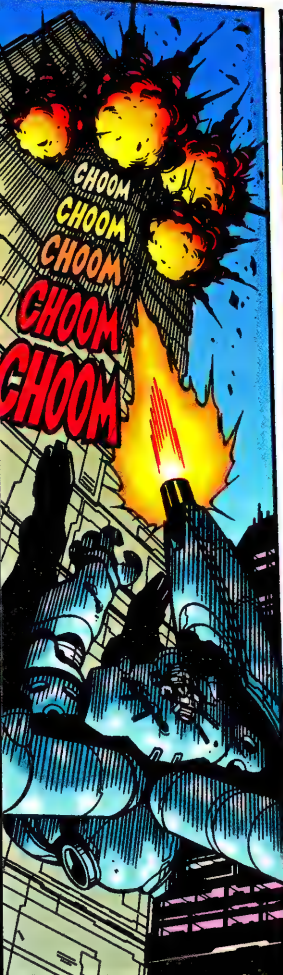
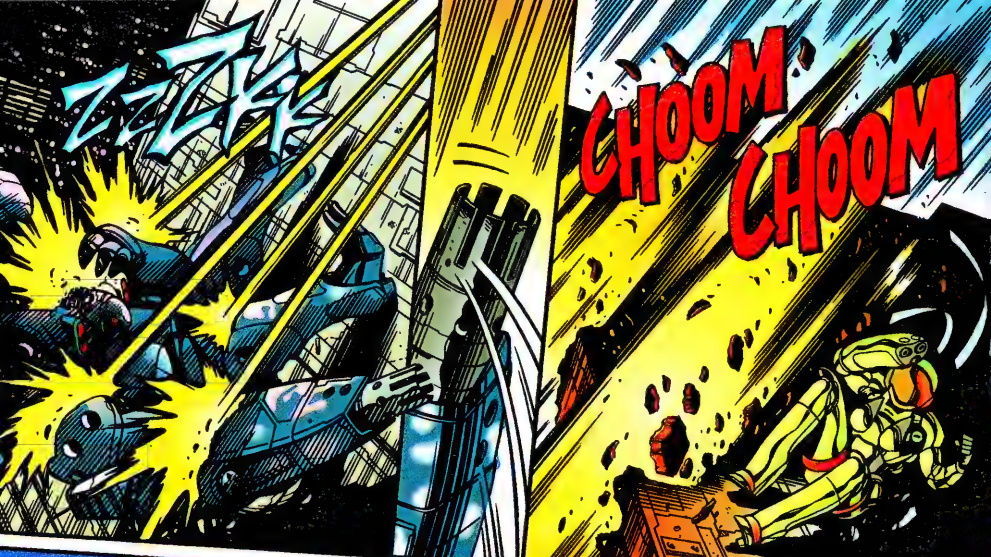


EDITORIAL



CLEARLY, A MORE THOUGHTFUL AND PREVENTIVE RESPONSE IS CALLED FOR--



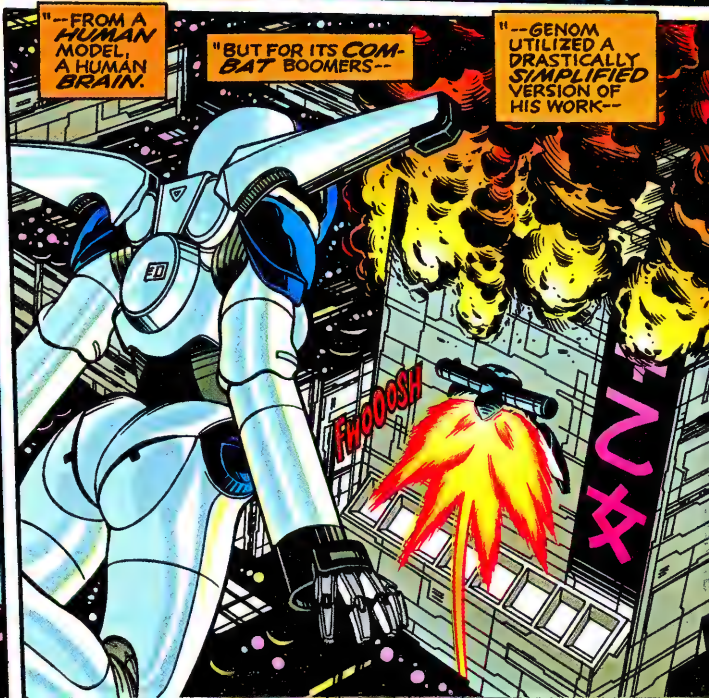


"MY FATHER, USING A SOMEWHAT RADICAL TECHNIQUE, DERIVED THE FORM OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE USED IN BOOMERS--

"--FROM A HUMAN MODEL, A HUMAN BRAIN.

"BUT FOR ITS COMBAT BOOMERS--

"--GENOM UTILIZED A DRASTICALLY SIMPLIFIED VERSION OF HIS WORK--





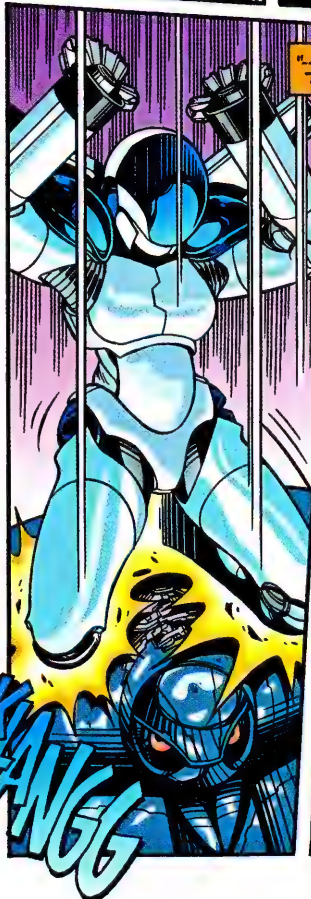
"--FAR MORE *UNSTABLE*, BUT MUCH CHEAPER TO *MASS PRODUCE*."



"NONETHELESS, EVEN *THESE* BELLIGERENT, ANIMALISTIC MONSTERS ARE STILL *SENTIENT*--"

"--STILL *HUMAN*, IN SOME DE-GRATED SENSE."

"SO WHEN WE MUST *STOP* ONE OF *THESE* TWISTED, PATHETIC CREATURES--"



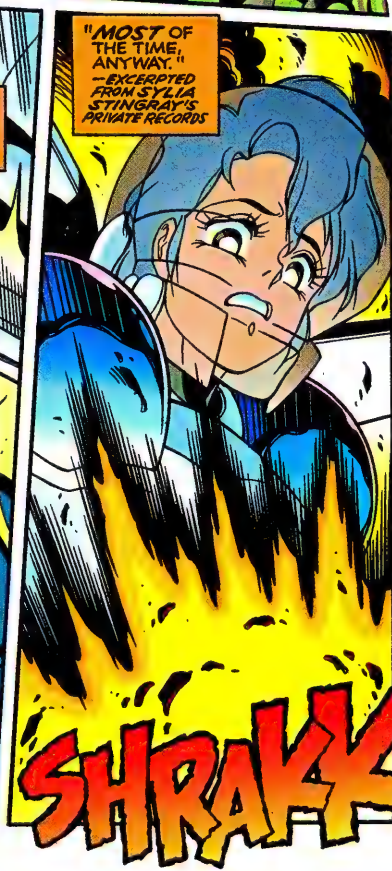
"--I TRY TO MAKE THEIR *END*--"

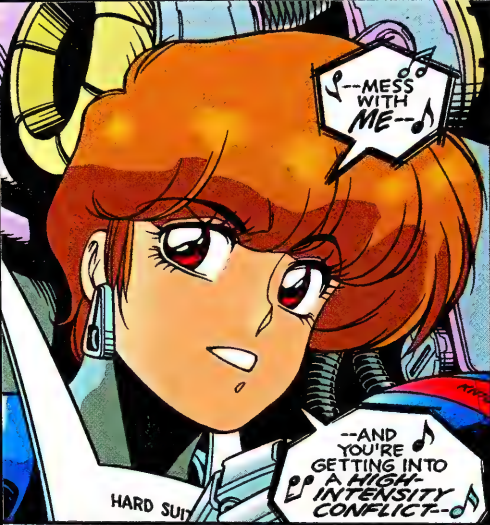
"--AS *QUICK* AND AS *MERCIFUL* AS POSSIBLE."

SABERS



"*MOST* OF THE TIME, ANYWAY."
--EXCERPTED FROM SYLIA STINGRAY'S PRIVATE RECORDS





--MESS WITH ME--

HARD SUIT

--AND YOU'RE GETTING INTO A HIGH INTENSITY CONFLICT--



TIME TO CARVE YET ANOTHER SWATH OF DESTRUCTION.

ONCE UPON A TIME, IN ANOTHER LIFE--



--A NIGHTMARE SCENARIO--

--WITH A LOW PROBABILITY OF SURVIVAL!

'COS I'M A WEAPON, BABY--

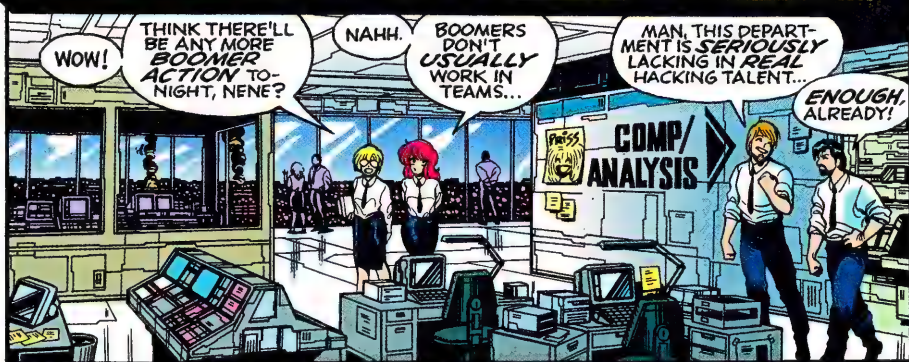
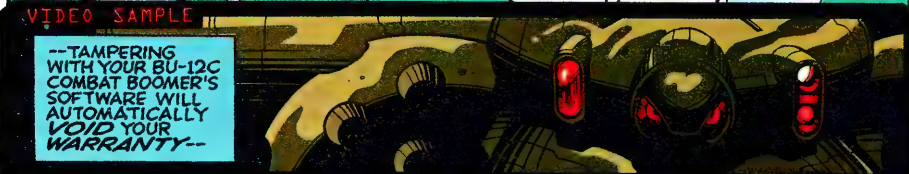
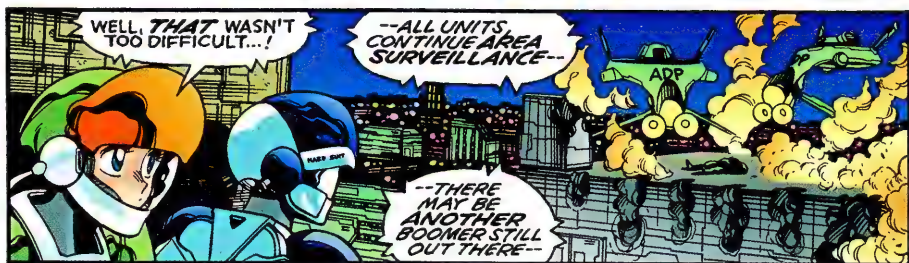
--A WEAPON OF MASS DESTRUCTION--

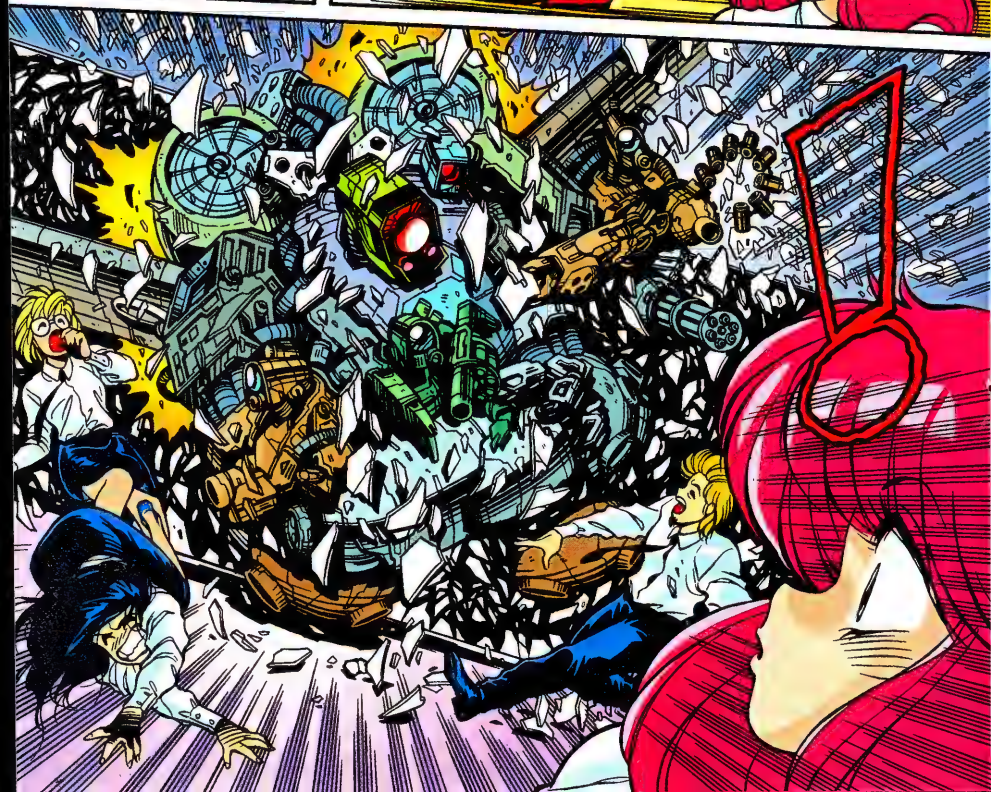
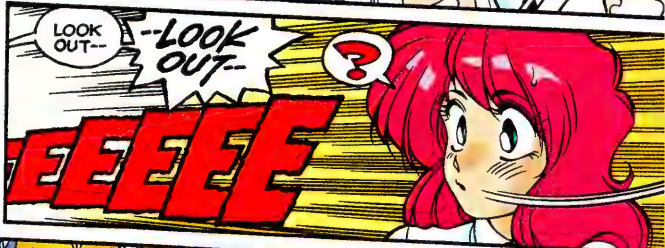
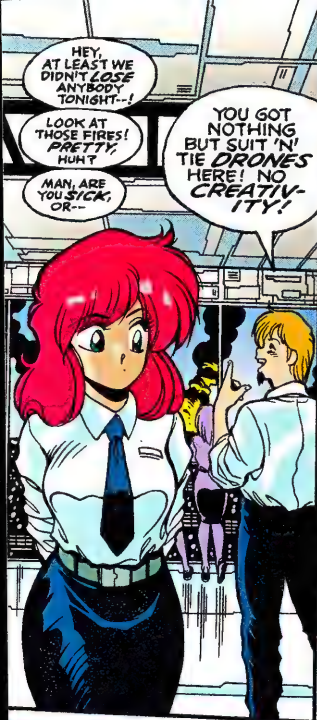


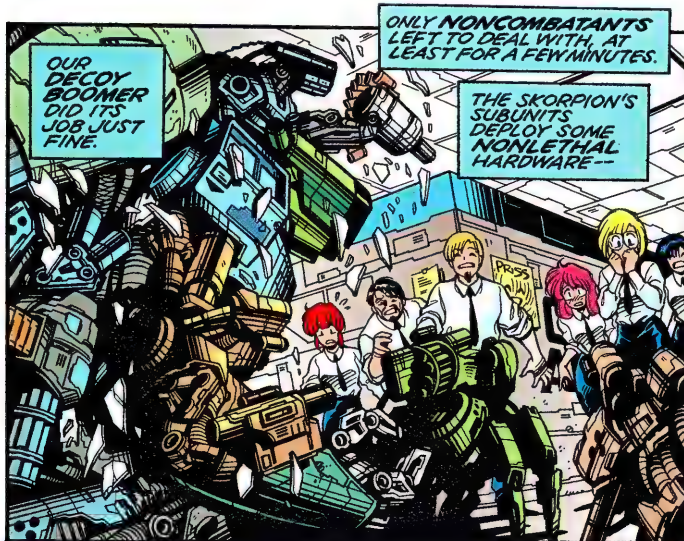
--BEFORE MY TEMPORAL LOBE ACQUIRED A FEW THOUSAND MICRO-LESIONS--

--I USED TO ENJOY THIS PART OF MY JOB, IN SOME PERVERSE WAY.

WHAT A MORON.





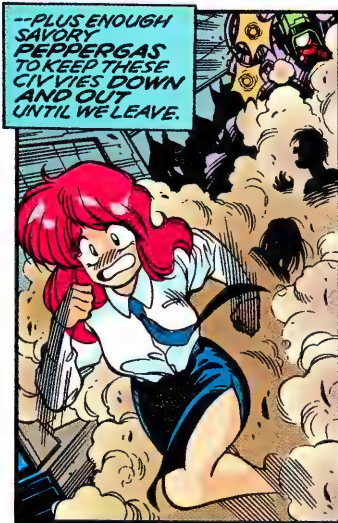
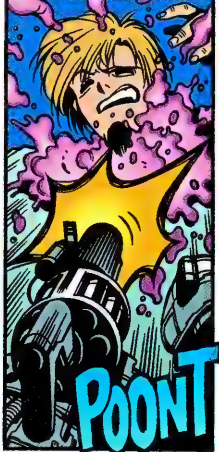


OUR
DECOY
BOOMER
DID ITS
JOB JUST
FINE.

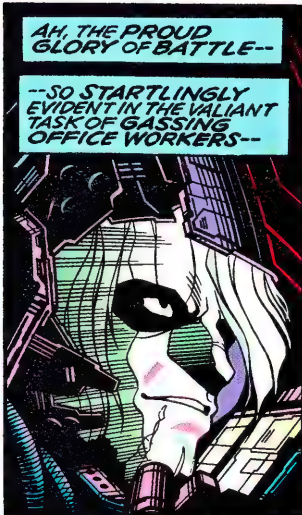
ONLY NONCOMBATANTS
LEFT TO DEAL WITH, AT
LEAST FOR A FEW MINUTES.

THE SKORPION'S
SUBUNITS
DEPLOY SOME
NONLETHAL
HARDWARE--

--NERVE GEL,
ELECTROSHOCK
AND KINETIC
STUN ROUNDS--



--PLUS ENOUGH
SAVORY
PEPPERGAS
TO KEEP THESE
CIVVIES DOWN
AND OUT
UNTIL WE LEAVE.



AH, THE PROUD
GLORY OF BATTLE--

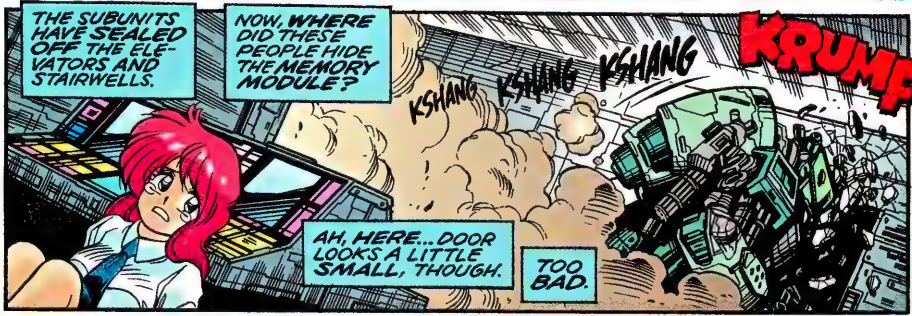
--SO STARTLINGLY
EVIDENT IN THE VALIANT
TASK OF GASSING
OFFICE WORKERS--



--ALL FORCES,
THIS IS ADPOLICE
HEADQUARTERS--

--WE'RE
UNDER
ATTACK--!

REPEAT,
UNDER
ATTACK--



THE SUBUNITS
HAVE SEALED
OFF THE ELE-
VATORS AND
STAIRWELLS.

NOW, WHERE
DID THESE
PEOPLE HIDE
THE MEMORY
MODULE?

AH, HERE... DOOR
LOOKS A LITTLE
SMALL, THOUGH.

TOO BAD.

KSHANG KSHANG KSHANG

KRUMF



HELLO, SYLIA...?

HELLPP!

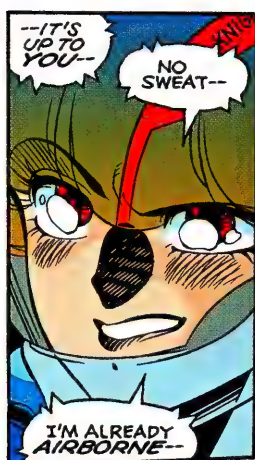


THAT'S KILO-METERS ACROSS TOWN--!

LINNA AND I WILL NEVER GET THERE IN TIME!

PRISS--

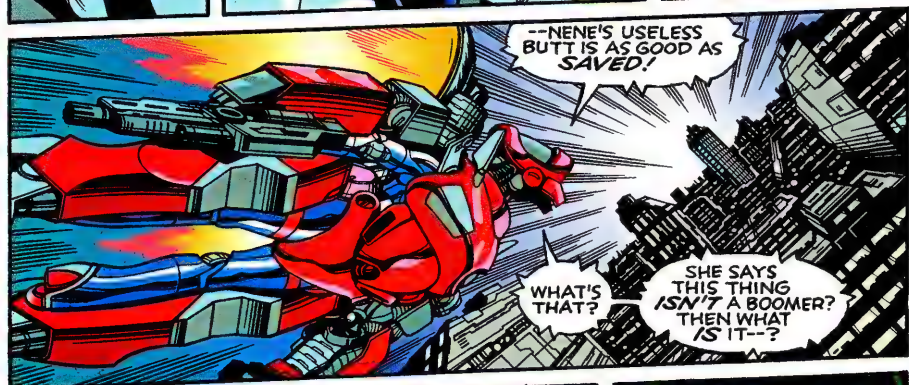
OH, MAN... NENE'S NO GOOD IN FIGHT, EVEN WITH A HARD-SUIT...!



--IT'S UP TO YOU--

NO SWEAT--

I'M ALREADY AIRBORNE--



--NENE'S USELESS BUTT IS AS GOOD AS SAVED!

WHAT'S THAT?

SHE SAYS THIS THING ISN'T A BOOMER? THEN WHAT IS IT--?



SO FAR, SO GOOD--

--THE ADP'S GROUND-POUNDERS ARE STILL STUCK IN TRAFFIC--



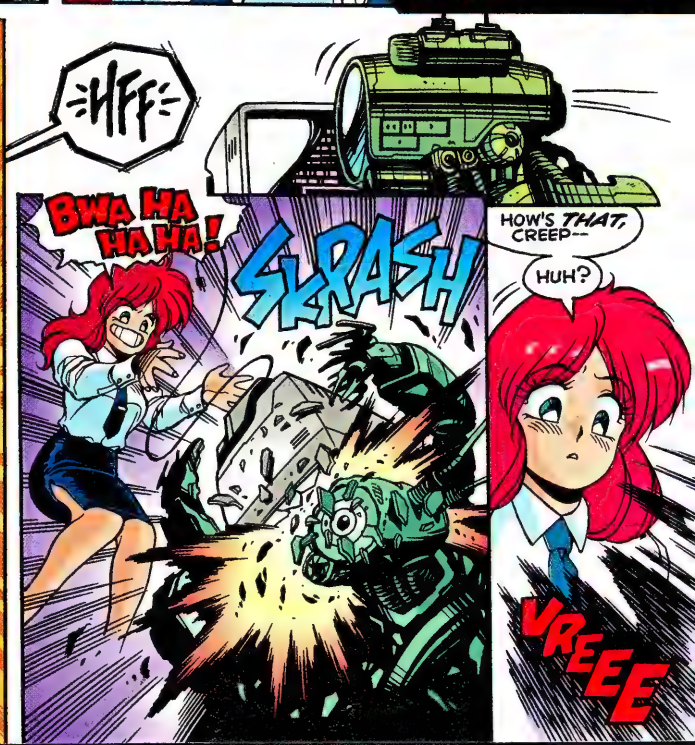
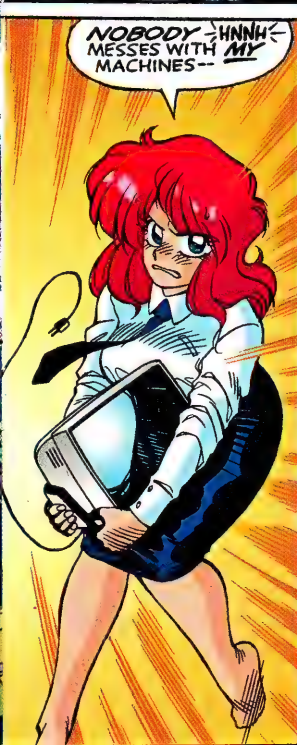
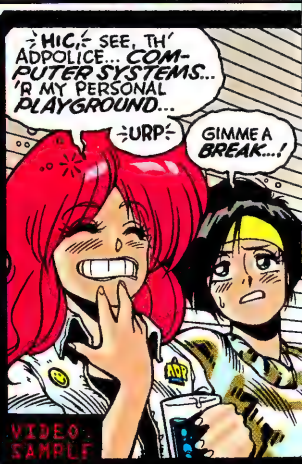
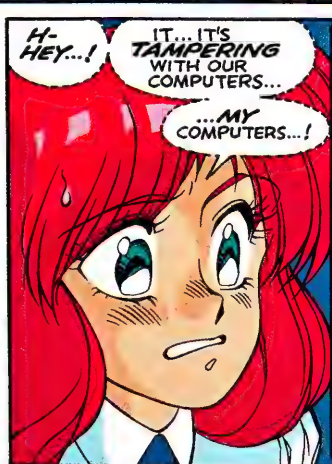
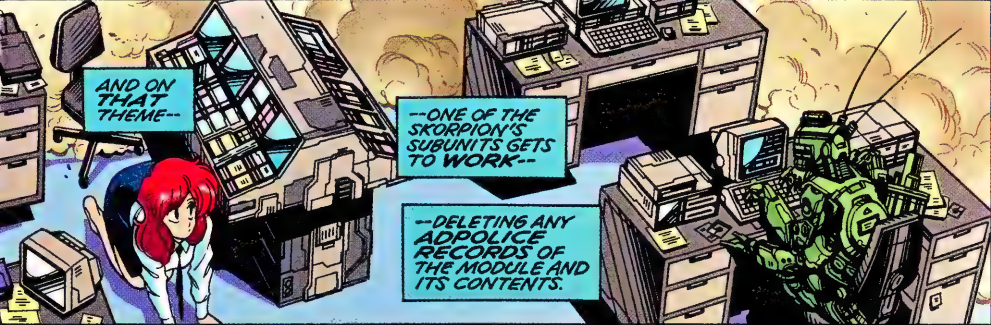
--AND THEIR HELOS ARE STILL MINUTES OUT.

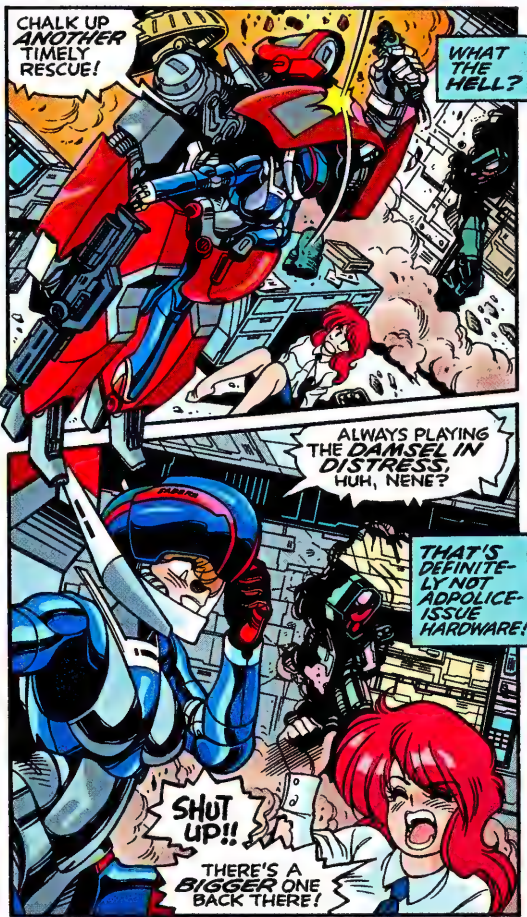
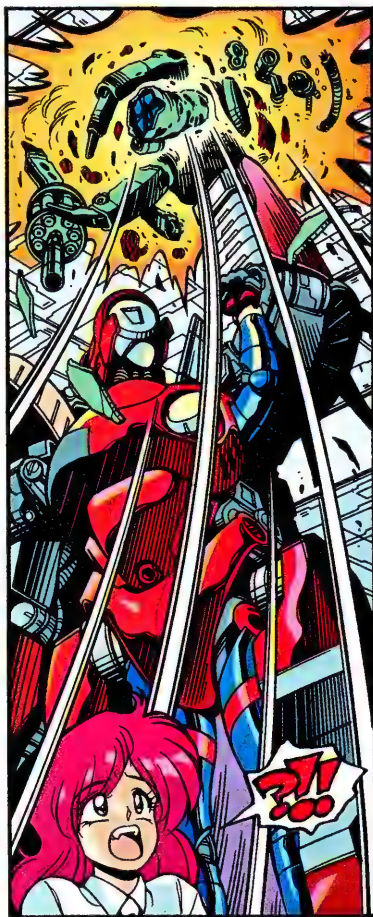
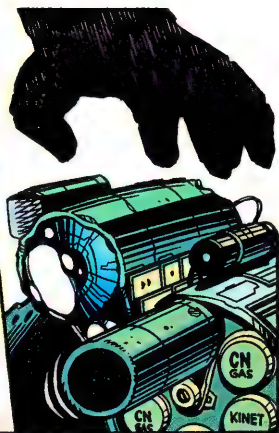
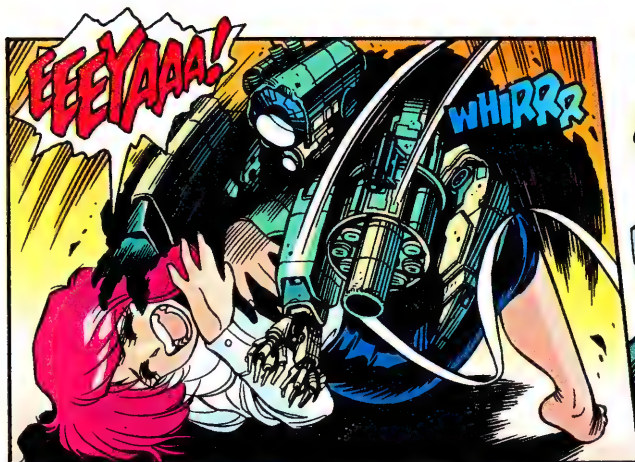
HERE'S THE MISSING MEMORY CACHE--

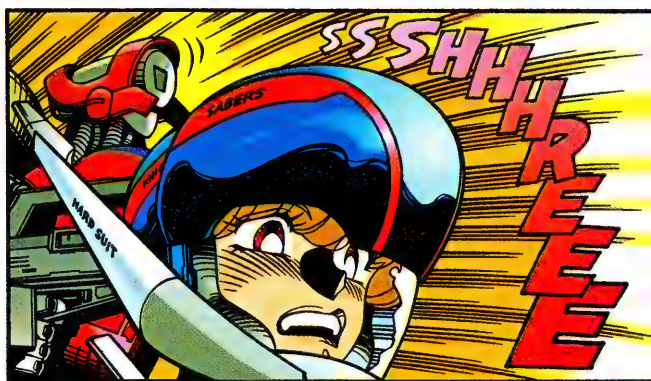
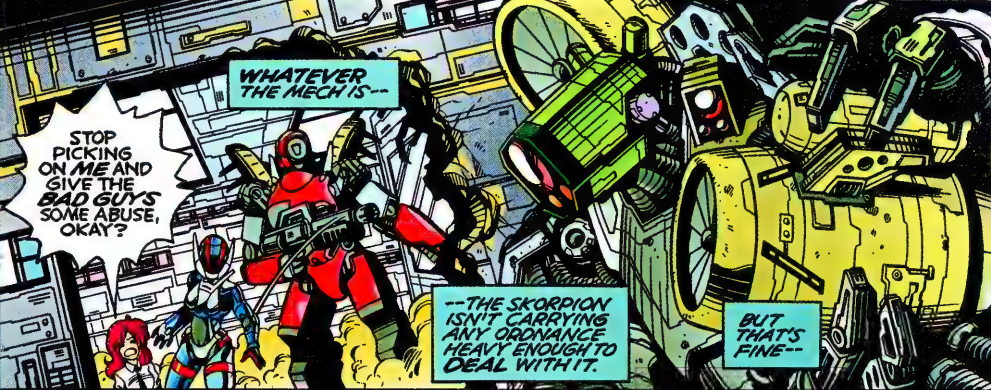


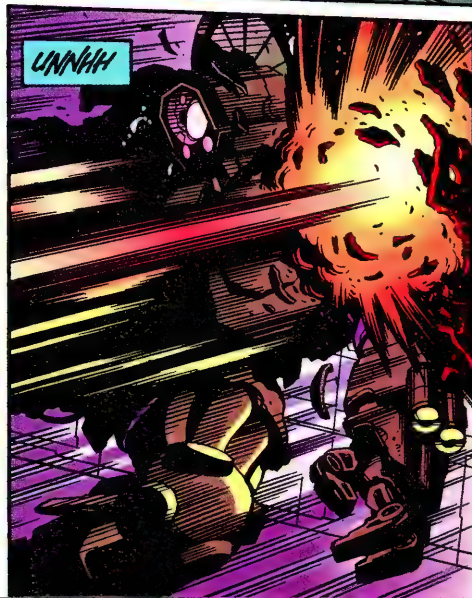
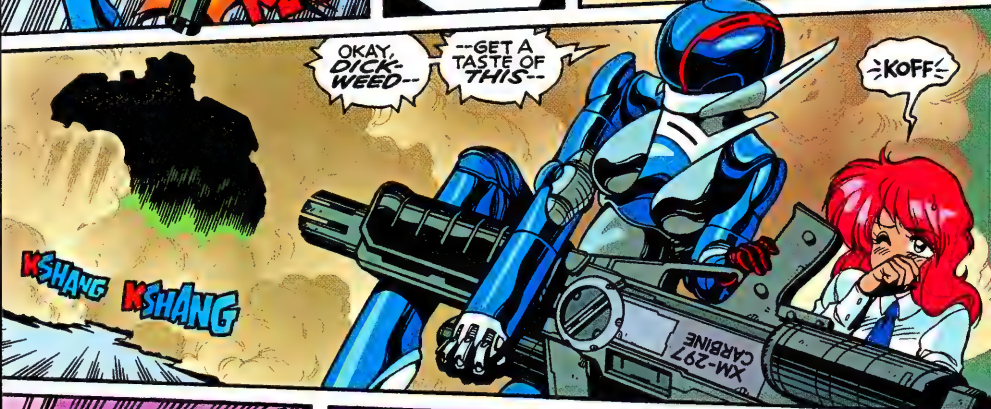
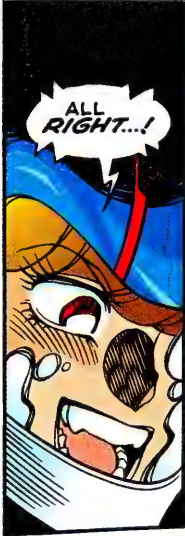
--SO TERRIBLY VITAL TO OUR POINTLESS LITTLE MISSION, I UNDERSTAND.

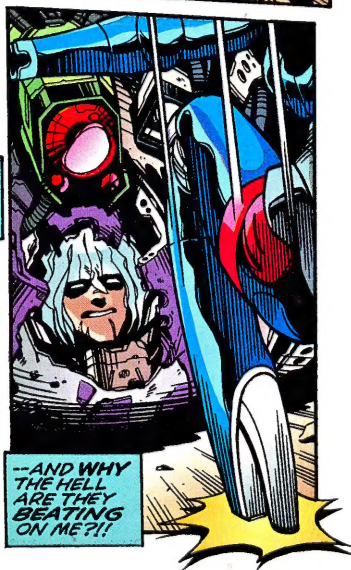
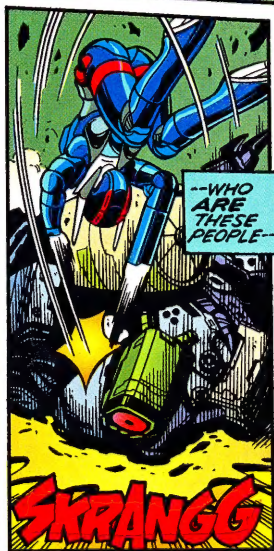
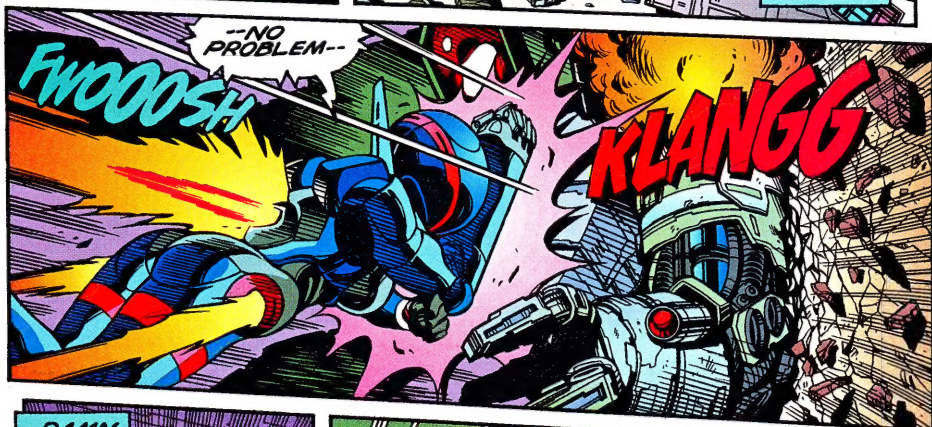
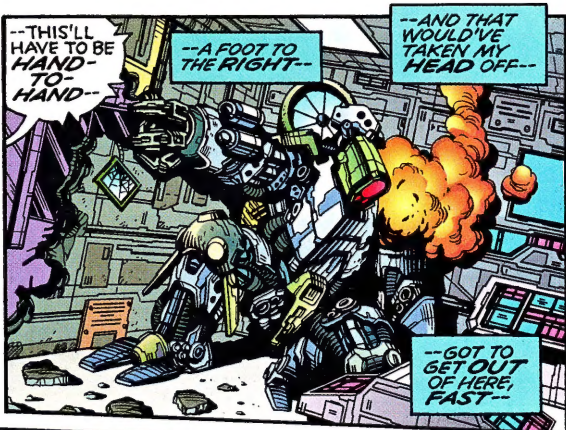
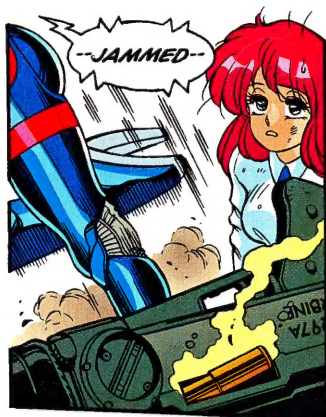
YOU'D THINK SUCH AN ADVANCED MECH WOULD BE BETTER AT KEEPING BACK-UP COPIES...

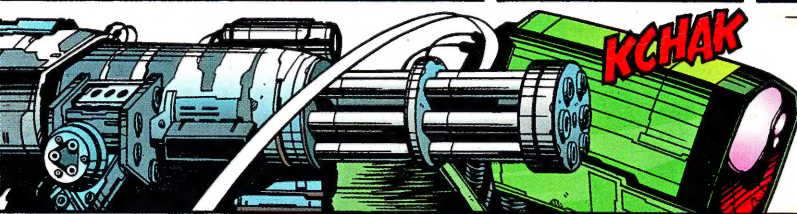
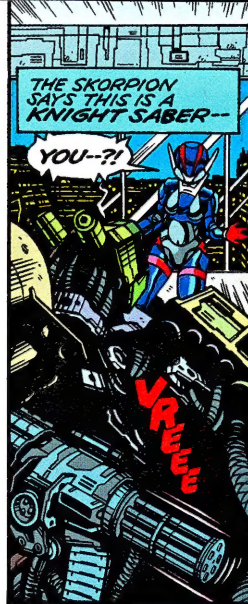




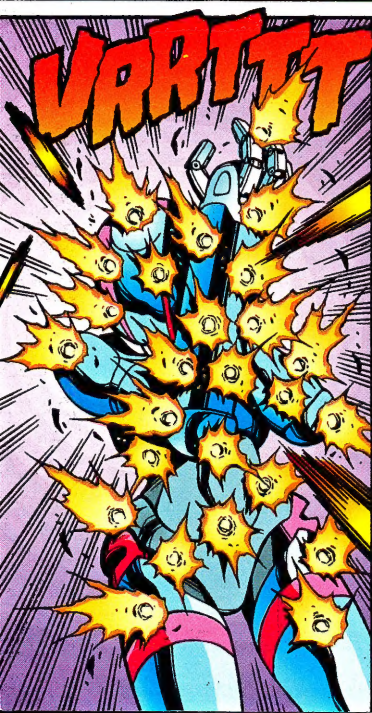


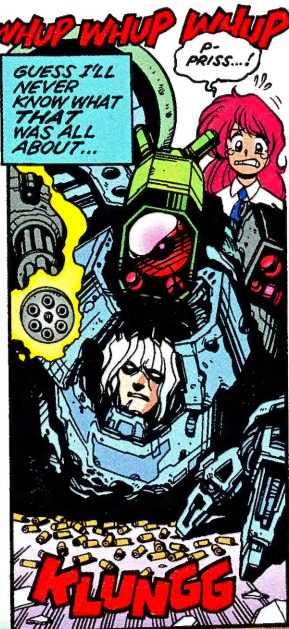
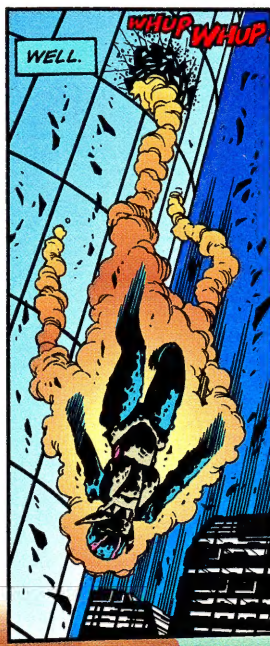
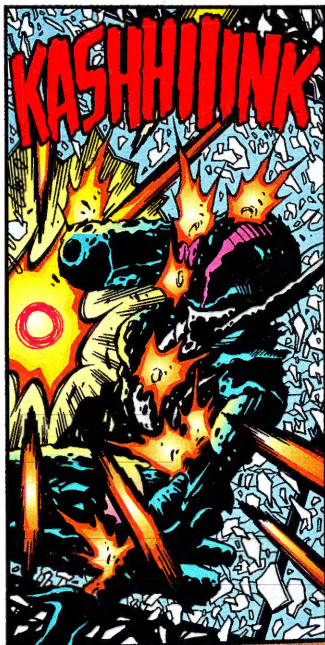






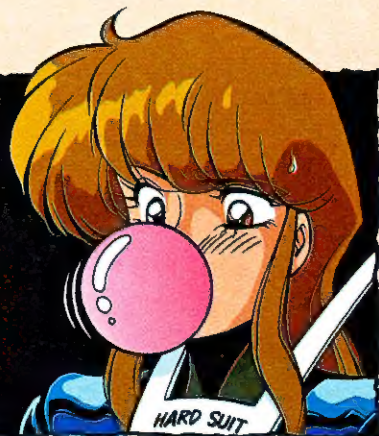
I'LL WORRY ABOUT THIS LITTLE PUZZLE LATER.





word balloons

c/o Dark Horse Comics 10956 S.E. Main St., Milwaukie, Or. 97222



Konichiwa, manga fans. I hope you still have your seatbelts on, because things only get wilder from here. Two letters arrived in time for this issue's press, but read them, because they're very informative and fun and overall better than a Boomer on your back. Besides, there's a surprise here!

Hi Dark Horse!

Thanks a lot for the preview copy of **Bubblegum Crisis: Grand Mal**. I suspect that you expect me to offer some constructive criticism on the book and hey! That's what I always do!

First of all: The Art. I have got to hand it to you, Warren. You are simply the most successful manga-style artist around! I absolutely love the way you mix American and Japanese style together. Although I don't know what it'll look like in color, I must say that the art on **Bubblegum Crisis** seems not to be as "blurry" (due to your highly detailed, always-present backgrounds) as some of the pages in **The Dirty Pair: Sim Hell** were.

As for a presentation issue, I think you guys did great! I'm not your die-hard **Bubblegum Crisis** fan, but as for both being introductive and at the same time not boring for those already introduced to the anime, I can see nothing wrong with your try. The story flowed smoothly throughout and I loved the "video sample" stuff and excerpts from several sources in order to convey information.

If the comic characters are faithful to the anime originals, well, I'm afraid I'm just not the one to judge that. I've only seen a couple of the OAVs, and I guess that's just not enough to base a comparative analysis on, but since you succeeded in all other fields, who knows?

I'm very much looking forward to seeing this stuff in color. Although it could destroy the art totally, I'm quite confident you won't let it.

Sincerely,

Zimeon Lundström
Marknadsvägen 123
S-183 34 TÄBY
Sweden

It was very kind of you to write, Zimeon and I hope that you have found **Bubblegum Crisis** to be as exciting as I have. Working with Adam Warren on this book has been a whirlwind and I can only say his is some of the best work I have ever had the pleasure working with.

Regarding the character designs (big surprise coming up here — get ready!), I can only suggest we listen to the words of Sonoda Kenichi, the original character designer for **Bubblegum Crisis**:

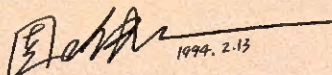
Hey guys, Sonoda here.

Man, I am *seriously* impressed by the detailed artwork Adam has done for the **BGC** comic. Especially those "very-annoying-to-draw-even-for-me" hardsuits and they're everywhere, too! Must have been a brain-bending amount of work...

I hear some American **BGC** fans are complaining about Adam's art, saying "It doesn't look exactly like the original **BGC**." Hell, check out the original animation videos — the characters don't always follow my model sheets exactly. But that's understandable, as the cells were drawn by various different animators. People should just enjoy the differing artistic interpretations — each artist leaves the stamp of their own personality on their work. In Adam's case, I really feel he has the same true "otaku spirit" that we Japanese creators do.

Go for it, Adam! You have the power to make all American comics fans into otaku!

Sonoda Kenichi

 1994. 2.13

P.S.: But if I could have one small request... I'd ask you to make Nene's nose just a bit smaller...

What can I add to that? Thank you, Sonoda Kenichi, for taking the time to write and tell us what you thought of **Bubblegum Crisis**.

Next month, we announce the winner of issue #1's Spot the Character contest. Who wins? Find out in the over-the-top, mayhem-packed conclusion of Dark Horse's **Bubblegum Crisis: Grand Mal**, #4, shipping July 5, 1994 to a comics shop near you. Don't miss it!

-Edward Martin III

